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of the police, which she says has all the "folly, without the abilities of the French." The artist alluded to was Houdon, a French sculptor, who came to America in 1785.

Mrs. Wright returned to London and died there in 1785, at the age of sixty. Mrs. Wright won a great reputation in England, where her admirers compared her to that great genius—John Flaxman. We fear that the comparison was more friendly than critical, but she doubtless deserved the name of sculptor much better than the Hon. Anne Seymour Damer, of whom Horace Walpole is said to have tried to make a tenth muse, and she certainly has the honor of having been the first professional sculptor in America.

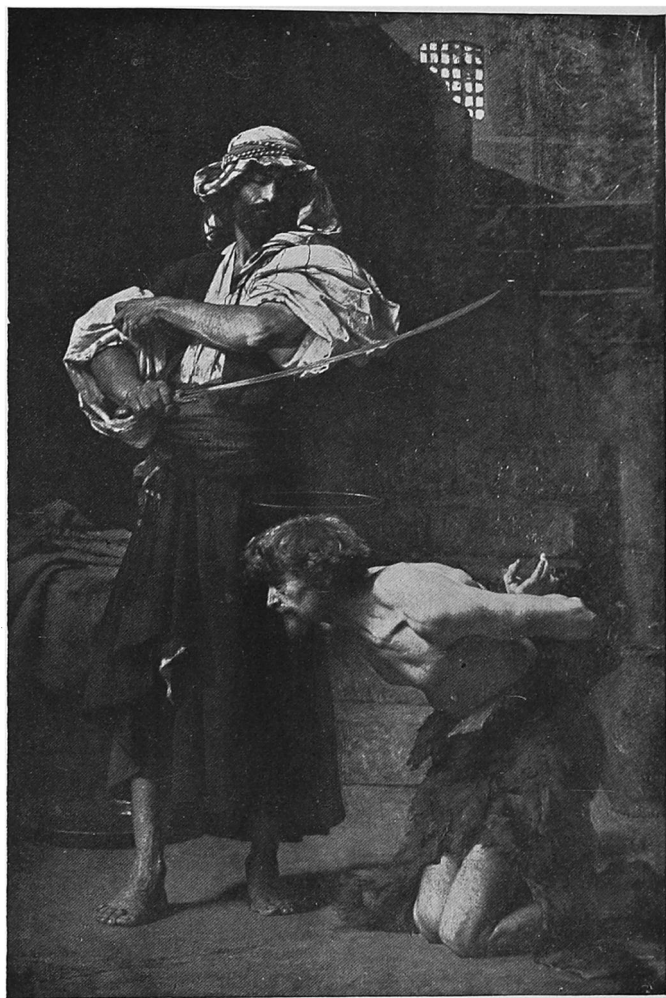
Art Department, Chicago Public Library. FRANK E. WASKA.

THE PERMANENT COLLECTIONS IN THE MUSEUM OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO.

VII.—American Paintings.

THE Art Institute of Chicago has no funds at its disposal for the purchase of paintings by American artists, although its frequent exhibitions furnish abundant opportunity. It is to be regretted that such a condition of affairs exists, for during the last few years the individual exhibitions of such well known and thoroughly American painters as George Inness, Robert W. Vonnoh, Th. Robinson, William M. Chase, the dozen or more canvases by the late W. L. Picknell, in the fall exhibition of 1897, to say nothing of the many fine things that come along in the regular annual spring and fall exhibitions, allowed a choice which becomes more and more limited as time goes on.

There is no denying the fact that a conservative policy is the one to be followed, and the Institute has been very particular when anything is suggested for permanent placing on its well-lighted walls. Many things are offered but few are chosen, so it is gratifying to be able to say that the few specimens of contemporary American painting are worthy examples of the artists represented. When the new Art Institute building was erected in 1892 it was thought that there would be wall space sufficient for years to come. The growth of the Institute has been so phenomenal and the generosity of its friends so pronounced that it is often found necessary to remove the paintings in galleries 43 and 45, where the American artists are hung, for special exhibitions. It is for this reason that many of the paintings spoken of in this article are not permanently on view.



THE BEHEADING OF
JOHN THE BAPTIST
BY CHARLES SPRAGUE PEARCE
ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

As has been mentioned, the American paintings are few in the permanent collections of the Institute, but this absence is not so noticeable as in other museums on account of the many regular and special exhibitions held through the year, giving patrons and visitors ample opportunity for studying contemporary art in a very comprehensive way. Much of the interest in a museum is found in studying the points of view and artistic expression of artists and following their development from earlier to later



THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS, BY WALTER M'ERWEN.

periods. This idea is distinctly brought out in a painting that made quite a sensation when it first came to America from Paris. It was painted in 1881 and shows the dramatic and academic influences of Bonnat. Charles Sprague Pearce, the artist of this large canvas—No. 230, "The Beheading of John the Baptist"—has changed so much in style and color that the pretty peasants and delicate gray landscapes of his French village today seem by another hand. There is more black in this earlier canvas than he would use now in a thousand pictures of the same size. It is well drawn, forcibly lighted, and composed according to the laws of the *École des Beaux Arts*, which seems to us now so old-fashioned, for the style in painting has



FLOWER GIRL IN HOLLAND
BY GEORGE HITCHCOCK
ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO



IN PICARDY
BY HARRY THOMPSON
ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

changed wonderfully in twenty years. Those of us who saw the remarkable pictures of Spanish women by Dannat at the World's Fair of 1893 would hardly think that the 229, "The Sacristy in Aragon," painted in 1886 so directly and rationally, could be by the same artist. The head of the fleshy old priest is a masterpiece of broad, frank painting, relieved against a background of simple gray. His still life of tomatoes and pears (No. 227) is a fine example of sturdy directness and vigorous technic. Both these pictures were bought by the Opera Festival Association and presented to the Institute.

Alexander Harrison is represented by a large canvas — No. 232, "Les Amateurs" — which shows distinctly the influence of Bastien Le Page, the master of plein-air painting, who with his followers did so much to kill the Academic conventionalities we spoke of as characterizing the "Beheading of John the Baptist," by Pearce. This canvas shows the new composition with its high horizon, the light scheme of color and the fidelity to nature that is so distinctly characteristic of our art of today. To me it is one of Harrison's fine things and an important example of American art that the Institute has a right to value very highly. Harrison has developed in breadth of touch and freshness of color, perhaps; but these sportive anglers in the lily-strewn piece of water, with its background of wooded shore, make a very attractive picture and a masterpiece, for its time, in true color values and charming tone. It was purchased by subscription in 1883.

Although very interesting in composition and impressive in dimensions, "In Picardy" (No. 234), by Harry Thompson, hardly warrants enthusiasm for either its color or values. It is a little severe and hard in drawing, but not so much so as some smaller works which have an angular trick of rendering that cannot be admired. The work of Mr. Thompson lacks to me the charm and serenity I am sure all would feel in the simple "Close of Day" (No. 312), by Charles H. Davis. This is one of the thoroughly satisfying things too seldom seen. An undulating field, a primitive sort of shed and plain sky with rising moon — a nature poem of beauty which reminds one of the artistic quality we admire in Cazin. Davis is one of our best, if not one of our most dramatic landscape painters. This small but important canvas was added in 1889.

George Hitchcock, who makes his home abroad and whose pictures of Holland life have given him an enviable reputation, is represented by one canvas which was presented by Mr. Potter Palmer in 1888. The "Flower Girl in Holland" (No. 237) is very fresh and pleasing in color, and has an attractive background of characteristic flat fields and canals marked by trees. Another painter who has chosen a Dutch subject is Walter McEwen, of Chicago. His "Judgment of Paris" represents three pretty



ALICE
BY WILLIAM M. CHASE
ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

daughters of Holland eagerly curious to see to whom will be given the apple held in the hand of a very Dutch personification of his Grecian prototype. It is light in key and follows a manner of painting that savors strongly of Munich. It is well done, is interesting, and has enough story to appeal to the general visitor. It is in the Munger collection, and while not belonging to the Institute has been loaned so long that it seems a permanent possession.

David Neal is a Munich man and his picture of "Interior of St. Mark's, Venice" (No. 233), and presented by Mr. Samuel M. Nickerson in 1887, bears the ear marks of the Munich school of the sixties. It is dark in tone, has a certain richness of color, but lacks values and realistic effect, while it is impressive and dignified.

Among the figure work, "Alice" (No. 226), by William M. Chase, is striking. It is so well known that comment is unnecessary. One of the latest acquisitions and a figure picture, is "Mother and Child," by Elizabeth Nourse. It represents her at her best and is a strong example of what a gifted woman can do.

There are other pictures which lack of space will not allow us to mention. Combined with the permanent pictures are always hung a number of loan pictures, which increases the American representation. Just now is seen the masterly canvas by Sargent, of the portrait of Master St. Gaudens, with his mother, reading. This is one of Sargent's masterpieces and was one of the finest pictures in the American section at the Fair.

The above list, although not complete, shows the tendency so often met with, of collecting paintings done by Americans who live abroad. There is hardly a work in the list done by a home man with a home subject. This is to be deplored, for there is American art enough produced under the flag, both in number and quality, that American museums ought to patronize and exhibit.

CHARLES FRANCIS BROWNE.